

Having described the invention, we claim:

1. In a data communication system having a plurality of mobile transceiver units communicative with a plurality of base transceiver units,  
a network controller intercommunicative between the base transceiver units and one or more host computers for data interchange therebetween, and having port means providing interface at a relatively low data rate and at a relatively high data rate.
2. The network controller of claim 1 wherein  
said controller includes means for interconnection of existing installed mobile transceiver units therewith.
3. The network controller of claim 2 wherein  
said controller communicates with said base transceiver units by an RS232C interface.
4. The network controller of claim 1 wherein  
said network controller providing a multiplicity of data communication ports thereon, at least two of said communication ports being software-controllable to select among a plurality of interface means.
5. The invention of claim 4 wherein  
at least one of said communication ports being communicative with a network of serially interconnected base transceiver units over a single twisted pair.
6. The invention of claim 1 wherein  
at least a portion of said mobile transceiver units are communicative with said base transceiver units by spread spectrum means.
7. The invention of claim 1 wherein  
at least a portion of said mobile transceiver units are communicative with said base transceiver units by synthesized frequency radio means.

8. The invention of claim 5 wherein

    said network of base transceiver units is operable over an RS485 interface.

9. The invention of claim 1 wherein

    said network controller providing a multiplicity of data communication ports thereon,  
    at least three of said communication ports being software-controllable to select among a  
    plurality of interface means

    at least two of said at least three communication ports being selectively controllable to  
    communicate by RS232, RS422, RS485, and V.35 means.

10. In a data communication system having a multiplicity of mobile portable transceiver units  
communicative by radio means with base transceiver units,

    apparatus for data interchange between said base transceiver units and a host computer  
    comprising,

    a housing having a multiplicity of communication ports thereon,

    at least three of said communication ports selectively controllable to provide data  
    interchange by an RS232 interface,

    at least two of said communication ports selectively controllable to provide data  
    interchange by a RS422 interface.

11. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein,

    at least one of said communication ports selectively controllable to provide data  
    interchange by a V.35 interface.

12. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein,

    said at least two communication ports are selectively controllable to provide data  
    interchange by a RS485 interface.

13. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein more than one host computer may be interconnected to

said data communication system.

14. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein,

a number of said multiplicity of communication ports are dedicated to interconnection to host computers and the remainder of said communicative parts are interconnectable with base transceiver units.

15. An improved apparatus for collecting, transmitting, and processing data stored in a code such as a bar code, said apparatus including a portable code reader with processing and transmitting units for radiating information in the form of electromagnetic waves, a stationary receiver physically separated from the code reader, and a data processor coupled to the stationary receiver, wherein the improvement comprises:

a network controller member having a multiplicity of communication ports thereon,  
said network controller member intercommunicative with said data processor at one of  
said communication ports,  
said network controller member intercommunicative with said stationary receiver at  
another of said communication ports,  
said network controller member selectively operable with said data processor at one or  
more communication rates.

16. The invention of claim 15 wherein

said network controller member selectively operable with said stationary receiver at  
one or more communication rates.

17. The invention of claim 15 wherein

said network controller selectively intercommunicative with a diagnostic device over  
one of said communication ports.

18. The invention of claim 15 wherein

a second data processor associated with said network controller and intercommunicative therewith.

19. The invention of claim 15 wherein

a multiplicity of stationary receivers intercommunicative with said network controller.

20. The invention of claim 15 wherein

said network controller selectively operable to communicate with said data processor at more than one data transfer rate.